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FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

LS 6821

BILL NUMBER: HB 1307

NOTE PREPARED: Jan 4, 2010

BILL AMENDED:

SUBJECT: Preventative Programs for At-Risk Children.

FIRST AUTHOR: Rep. Richardson

FIRST SPONSOR:

BILL STATUS: As Introduced

FUNDS AFFECTED: **GENERAL**
 DEDICATED
 FEDERAL

IMPACT: Local

Summary of Legislation: This bill provides that a juvenile court may create a preventative program for at-risk children (program). The bill provides that a court may appoint a Guardian Ad Litem (GAL) or Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) for a child who is participating in a program. The bill also provides procedures for a GAL or CASA participating in a program. It provides civil and criminal immunity to a person who: (1) requests that a child participate in a program; or (2) participates in a plan for a child in a program.

Effective Date: July 1, 2010.

Explanation of State Expenditures:

Explanation of State Revenues:

Explanation of Local Expenditures: *Summary:* This bill may potentially increase local expenditures to the extent (1) a juvenile court elects to create a preventative program for at-risk children, and (2) the court elects to assign Guardian Ad Litem (GAL) or Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) representation to youth involved in at-risk programming. The average cost per child who receives GAL/CASA representation under the current system is approximately \$580 to \$800 annually. Total increases in local expenditures are indeterminable.

Additional Information:

Under the bill, juvenile courts are authorized to create preventative programs for at-risk children. Local

expenditures may increase to the extent juvenile courts elect to implement preventative programs for at-risk children which require additional local funding. Actual increases are unknown and depend on the decisions of local juvenile court administrators.

Additionally, the bill allows a juvenile court to assign a GAL/CASA representative for a youth who is participating in a preventative program for at-risk children. This may increase the workload of GAL/CASA representatives to the extent they are assigned to at-risk youth. Actual increases in workload are indeterminable.

The Division of State Court Administration reports there are not enough GAL/CASA representatives to provide representation to youth in preventative programs even if the representation was at the option of the court. As of December 2009, there were approximately 4,000 children in need of services (CHINS) waiting for GAL/CASA representation. Currently, GAL/CASA representation is not required until a child is determined to be a CHINS. The average cost per child who receives GAL/CASA representation under the current system is approximately \$580 to \$800 annually. Actual increases in local expenditures are indeterminable.

Explanation of Local Revenues:

State Agencies Affected:

Local Agencies Affected: Juvenile courts; Local GAL/CASA programs.

Information Sources: Leslie Rogers, Division of State Court Administration.

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